

# **COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**

CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **House Approves Davis-Authored** **Legislation on ID Security**

*Bill Sets Rigorous Proof of Identity and Security Requirements  
For State-Issued Driver's Licenses and Identity Cards*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA) is pleased to announce that the House of Representatives today passed, by a vote of 261 to 161, legislation to tighten requirements for state-issued driver's licenses and other IDs – provisions authored by Chairman Davis.

The legislation, H.R. 418, establishes minimum standards for federal acceptance of driver's licenses and state-issued identification cards. These common-sense reforms address shortfalls identified by the 9/11 Commission in its final report and enhance the United States' ability to combat terrorism within our borders.

"Improving license security is a critical component to fighting terrorism," Davis said. "If you are going to use a driver's license to board a plane or open a bank account or any other federal purpose, the federal government must be confident that you are who you say you are. To do that, we need to set minimum standards, consistent across the country, for what a secure ID is."

The license-security provisions in H.R. 418 are virtually identical to Davis-authored language approved last year by the House as part of the "9/11 Recommendations Implementation Act." Those provisions, however, were all but dropped from the conference report that was signed into law at the end of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Davis reintroduced the license-security legislation this Congress as H.R. 368, which was rolled into H.R. 418 before the House approved the measure today.

As the 9/11 Commission Report noted, all but one of the 19 hijackers who took part in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks acquired some form of U.S. identification, usually by fraud. Having these forms of ID assisted them in boarding commercial flights, renting cars, and other activities necessary to carrying out their plot.

“The license security legislation approved today shows that we are dedicated to making sure we do not provide such a hospitable environment in the future,” Davis said. “Minimum standards for federal recognition of identification documents are, by themselves, no silver bullet. However, they are an important aspect of a comprehensive security policy, and I am pleased that the House has agreed.”

The legislation establishes minimum document and issuance standards for federal acceptance of state-issued driver’s licenses and personal identification cards. It provides for: a rulemaking process whereby the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Department of Transportation and the states, would establish minimum standards based upon the principles set forth in statute, which focus on: requirements for minimum information provided on the driver’s license or identification card; minimum personal identification information that must be obtained and verified from the applicant; and minimum standards that must be part of the issuance process, including retention of source documents, restricted access to records, physical security of facilities, security clearance requirements and fraudulent document recognition training for employees; Finally, the legislation requires proof of legal presence in the United States.

The legislation gives states three years to comply with the minimum standards necessary to interface with the federal government.

The Davis-authored provisions are consistent with actions taken by individual states to date. For example, in 2003, Nevada stopped accepting licenses from 23 states as primary proof of an individual’s identity because their license and issuance standards are less stringent than Nevada’s. Arizona took the similar action this past summer by no longer accepting the driver’s licenses or identification cards issue by 19 states as primary proof identity.

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